



Cities Mean **BUSINESS**

A PUBLICATION OF THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA | ISSUE 2 | 2013

Growing the future

**Communities nurture
young professionals**

An artist's touch

**Lively arts scene
enhances cities**

You see a police car...



We see a police officer who works closely with fire departments and EMS, who knows every business owner downtown, who can name every city street and who buys 12 snow cones on Saturdays even though his T-ball team has never won a game.

CITIES MEAN BUSINESS

www.CitiesMeanBusiness.org

MASC Municipal Association
of South CarolinaSM

CONTENTS

6 Growing the Future

The nurture of young professionals

By Amy Geier Edgar



COVER STORY

Cities Mean BUSINESS

A publication of Municipal Association of South Carolina

1411 Gervais St., P.O. Box 12109
Columbia, SC 29211
803.799.9574
mail@masc.sc
www.masc.sc

Miriam Hair

Executive Director,
Municipal Association of SC

Reba Campbell

Deputy Executive Director,
Municipal Association of SC

Contributing writer

Amy Geier Edgar



10 An Artist's Touch

Developing the arts in the city

By Amy Geier Edgar



12 Reaching Upward

Community Development

By Amy Geier Edgar

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

4 Letter from the Editor

By Reba Hull Campbell

5 Working Relationships

By Katherine M. Swartz

Published by

SC BIZ NEWS
www.scbiznews.com

Letter from the **EDITOR**

In this issue of *Cities Mean Business*, we look at several topics that go beyond the basic services cities and towns offer. So often, it's the quality of life amenities that attract people to want to live and work in certain places. Whether it's public art, a high tech corridor or community gardens, these amenities are becoming increasingly important in our state's economic development efforts.

In today's world, we increasingly see young professionals deciding where they want to live before determining what type of job they want to pursue. Given this trend, it's important that local officials in cities and towns recognize the assets these young professional want. Read about how three South Carolina cities are using unique strategies to attract and retain these young workers to public and private sector jobs.

An active and engaged arts community is frequently noted as a high priority for companies looking to locate in a city or town. See what three South Carolina cities and towns are doing to get it right in creating public/private partnerships to make sure residents have access to great visual and performing arts for all ages.

Community development means different things in different contexts. We take a look this month at community development efforts that support economic development in a variety of ways. Learn about efforts in cities and towns to create community gardens, town/gown partnerships, neighborhood revitalization projects and recreational opportunities that appeal to a wide cross section of local residents.

Enjoy reading!



Reba Hull Campbell

Reba Hull Campbell

rcampbell@masc.sc

Editor

Cultivating Talent: *Build Place Alongside The Economy*

By Katherine M. Swartz



Katherine M. Swartz

You've read the headlines for years now: Talent matters, now more than ever.

Our state's ability to attract, engage and retain talented, creative, entrepreneurial and socially conscious citizens will be critical to our success for generations to come. Creating jobs and fostering an environment for successful business expansion strengthens our economy – but only if we have the right talent to fill those positions. And only if our cities and towns are attractive to young generations who consider where they live in conjunction with finding or creating jobs.

Research by The Knight Foundation indicates strong positive correlations between community attachment and economic prosperity – the more connected South Carolinians are to their community, the more prosperous our state will become. Cultivating cultures of service and philanthropy is a key component to success – and to cultivating talent. Municipalities, government agencies, community organizations and businesses must band together to improve quality of life in our state while opening their doors to allow young talent to be leaders in this effort. We must leverage the energy, passion and experience of young talent as vehicles for change. We must challenge native talent to reinvent and rediscover their community.

Organizations like Greenville's PULSE, Charleston Young Professionals, Grand Strand SCENE and Columbia Opportunity Resource work in tandem to identify, engage and retain talent. You will find programs ranging from group mentoring series, to issues forums, to large-scale community service projects and a wide array of social events all designed to connect peer leaders to each other for the purpose of improving life in their community. Ultimately these connections make the talent magnet that much stronger, even irresistible, for our state.

Our state offers so many amenities to young people considering where to live. Unfortunately a positive first impression (even worse a lifelong impression) may often be overshadowed by negative press and the perception that our state is not inclusive or progressive. This hurdle can be overcome by fostering and creating personal connections — our state is small enough to be able to manage such an effort.

The newly launched Diversity Recruitment Consortium is making this a reality, by “bringing a concerted group of organizations together to be effective at presenting a fairer picture of lifestyle in the state than that which is possible with any single organization.” Spearheaded by The Riley Institute, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce and the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, the program deploys an ARC method: attract, recruit, cultivate, with the goal of not only recruiting talent, but also helping individuals become thriving citizens in our state. The person-to-person approach has the ability to revolutionize the talent war for South Carolina.

By focusing on creating person-to-person connections among young talent; by connecting them to the community and state they may consider calling home; by eliminating obstacles to living, working, learning, leading and playing large; by touting our state's strengths and peak assets, we can and will create a world-class talent magnet that attracts, retains and engages the best and brightest talent. ●

Katherine M. Swartz is former vice president of talent and leadership development for the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce and executive director of Columbia Opportunity Resource. She is currently director of the Leadership Center at Columbia College. She can be reached at k.m.swartz@hotmail.com and on Twitter: @katswartz.

Young professionals enjoy award-winning cuisine and local seafood on Shem Creek. (Photo/Town of Mount Pleasant.)



GROWING PROS

Cities attract young professionals with recreation, education opportunities

By Amy Geier Edgar

When Patrick Bryant started his video production company, Go To Team, out of a spare bedroom in 1997, he chose to live in Mount Pleasant because of its wonderful quality of life.

“As a company traveling and working all over the U.S., we could have located literally anywhere. The main thing that drew us to Mount Pleasant was the terrific atmosphere to raise a family,” Bryant said. “Over the years the neighborhoods, schools, proximity to the beach, ease of travel to downtown and terrific town have kept us here. Mount Pleasant has so many wonderful recreation opportunities -- Waterfront Park, Palmetto Islands County Park, the Yorktown, Shem Creek, and public swimming pools. Over the years the town has done a great job investing in infrastructure that families like ours really value.”



The former 'Bleachery' power plant is envisioned as office space in Rock Hill.
(Photo/Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh & Associates)

knowledge park

ROCK HILL, SC

Today's young professionals often are choosing where to live before they even have jobs, and they're drawn to cities that offer vast educational, cultural and recreational opportunities. Many municipalities are looking at ways to enhance their quality of life amenities, offer additional training and recruit the high-tech jobs that will attract and retain these young workers who are making up the new knowledge economy.

The Town of Mount Pleasant has been working to expand its opportunities for recreation, education and the arts. It is investing in new businesses and continuing to revitalize its Main Street corridor. The town also has been emphasizing its unique sense of place by increasing public access to the water and encouraging mixed-use developments, according to Town Administrator Eric DeMoura.

"If you were to drive down our historic Main Street corridor, Coleman Boulevard, on any given day, you would see just how effective these strategies have been," DeMoura said. "Residents and visitors alike are out on Shem Creek enjoying kayaking and paddleboarding. They are playing games and listening to live music on the front patios of our new restaurants. They are using our new bike lanes to bike to work, to shop, to dine and to go home. And they use our Business Incubator (Biz Inc.) to start-up their new businesses."

As a business owner, Bryant said the efforts have been paying off. "The key for any town that wants to attract entrepreneurs and business owners is to invest in infrastructure and programs that make starting that first business very easy and then support them as they grow," said Bryant, 39.

Rock Hill is developing its new Knowledge Park in the downtown area in an effort to specifically target and retain a workforce of young, educated professionals.

A collaboration of public and private leaders, this economic development effort currently is in a developer selection phase. The Knowledge Park Leadership Group, which is leading the development, received 10 responses from its Request for Qualifications from developers, and began the process of interviewing candidates in June, according to Rock Hill Knowledge Park Development Manager David Lawrence.

"The Knowledge Park is both a defined place — a one square mile area in downtown Rock Hill — and it's a brand which speaks to this area as a place for knowledge economy businesses, knowledge-based employment, educational opportunities, amenities that



Taking a leisurely stroll along the waterways of the new Shem Creek Park. (Photo/Town of Mount Pleasant.)

support knowledge-based uses, and advanced technologies,” Lawrence said.

Leaders are hoping the development will be the anchor for Rock Hill’s 21st century economy. Knowledge Park will offer a mixed-use, urban environment with historic buildings, shops and restaurants all connected by a proposed streetcar. It will offer the advanced technology infrastructure necessary to information-based industries.

And leaders expect to have an educated workforce of young professionals ready to fill these new jobs thanks to the proximity of Winthrop University and York Technical College.

Many young professionals seek mentoring or extra training on the job to further their skills and advance their careers.

In the fall of 2011, the City of Anderson began an 18-month employee enrichment initiative, the Municipal Government Professional Development Program, designed to identify, nurture and retain young leaders within the city’s workforce.

Twenty-seven management and supervisory level employees participated. A goal of the program was to engage young professionals in the greater mission of the city and provide career growth opportunities. They were teamed with more experienced leaders, exposed to the functions of other departments, and had opportunities to study best practices from other municipalities and private sector businesses.

“We created a broad-based comprehensive program for our folks that included both personal and interpersonal skill building opportunities,” said Linda McConnell, assistant city manager. “We realize that keeping and attracting the best young talent requires some new approaches.”

Brandy Walters, assistant director of human resources for the City of Anderson, participated in the program. Walters, 33, has been with the city for three years. She has a background in private industry, where she said opportunities for promotion come about more quickly than in government jobs.

Having the chance to work on projects outside her usual duties has helped keep the job from getting stale, allowed her to discuss ideas with division heads and city leaders, and paved the way for advancement, she said.

The program included monthly workshops and presentations on topics including communications and presentation skills, ethics training, and an overview of city financial processes and budget. Participants identified key issues facing the city and were asked to define the problems, opportunities and solutions. They presented final projects to City Council on topics such as economic development, diversifying revenues for the city and improving internal communications.

“We believe that the program is unique not only in its scope, but also in the far reaching impact it has for us going forward,” McConnell added. “We planted some seeds for sturdy trees in the future of our city as we nurtured individuals to commit themselves to life-long learning and enhanced professionalism.” ●

An Artist's Touch

Cities support arts to improve quality of life, local economy

By Amy Geier Edgar

Across the state, cities and towns host art walks, music in the parks and live theater. These events are entertaining for families and visitors, but they also serve a deeper purpose. Many city leaders see how these efforts build a sense of pride and community, attract tourism and spur additional economic development.

Many prospective businesses and families who are looking for a place to open a manufacturing facility, a commercial business, or a place to live want a well-rounded community that offers amenities to promote a great quality of life, said Greer City Administrator Ed Driggers.

The City of Greer has supported the arts in the community for many years. Last summer, the city opened the completely renovated National Guard Armory as a downtown events space and cultural arts center. The center, known as the Cannon Centre, is the new home to the Greer Cultural Arts Council.

The state-of-the-art facility allows for visual and performing arts through classes, displays and performances. The city contributed \$10,000 to the cultural arts council to fund a public art sculpture outside the facility. The arts council used the funds to partner with the J. Harley Bonds Career Center in Greer for production of a sculpted reproduction of the arts council logo. This sculpture demonstrates the city's commitment to the arts and to its local artists, Driggers said.

The partnership has been a winner for all involved, said Greer Communications Manager Steve Owens. The city got a permanent resident in its newest facility that will generate additional arts programs for the public. The arts council now has a much-needed permanent home and the room to stage those programs. And the Harley Bonds students were provided with a major art project that will help expand their skills and provide additional funding for the career program, Owens said.

Greer's support of the arts helps distinguish it as a great place to live, work and play, Driggers said.

"When we make investments in our community and in our people, we typically find that (the arts) is appealing to potential investors," Driggers said. "The arts are an important piece of the puzzle. We want to facilitate putting all the pieces together."

Arts are basic to a well-rounded education and to the culture of a community, according to Town of Ridgeway Mayor Charlene Herring. For the past seven years, the Town of Ridgeway has sponsored its Arts on the Ridge

event, which features the art of local community members. There are free artist demonstrations, an author roundtable and live music performances. Businesses open their doors

and put art on display during an art walk. Community members share memories of Ridgeway through oral storytelling. The schools also are involved with Fairfield and Richland county students participating in an art exhibit and show.

"We consider this a showcase event," Herring said. "We are very proud to be able to expose the incredible degree of artistry that resides right here in our own communities."

The event has a great turnout and gets bigger every year, said Arts on the Ridge Chairwoman Phyllis Guti-

errez. "The arts and culture are what make people fall in love with their city and their community," she said.

The City of Fountain Inn has used the arts as a tool to revitalize its economy. The city decided to transform a building it had purchased in 1998 — which had been housing city offices — into the Fountain Inn Center for Visual and Performing Arts. The center is





Left: Fountain Inn Mayor Gary Long performs in a musical at the Fountain Inn Center for Visual and Performing Arts. (City of Fountain Inn)



Right: Greer turned a former armory into the Cannon Centre overlooking the City Park Gazebo. (City of Greer photo by Steve Owens)

home to several resident companies: Fountain Inn Repertory Experience, the Fountain Inn Arts Academy, the Fountain Inn Symphony Orchestra and the Fountain Inn Chorale. It also offers classes, camps and touring shows.

Cheryl Pelicano is the production coordinator for the center and one of the founding members of the Fountain Inn Repertory Experience. She's proud of what the center has been able to present to the community — from offering affordable tickets for the symphony to providing a first theater experience for elementary students.

“The arts are here and alive,” Pelicano said. “This center is the heart and soul of our little community.”

In many cases, arts funding is the first thing that gets cut in difficult budget years. The arts don't always pay for themselves, said Van Broad, the city's economic development and cultural arts director, and often require the support of sponsorships and grants.

Yet in Fountain Inn, the mayor, city administrator and council saw the value of the arts and had the vision to create the center, establishing it as a separate city department that receives funding, Broad said.

“The city decided to invest in itself by investing in an arts center,” Broad said.

Even Broad's job title — economic development and cultural arts director — illustrates the city's core belief that the arts are directly tied to the economy. Broad said he uses the

facility as a recruiting tool for businesses.

“It has been the catalyst for part of our downtown revitalization efforts and is the first stop on my business recruitment efforts,” he said.

By all accounts, the Fountain Inn Center has been a success. Since its first year of operation in 2008, ticket sales have grown from 6,000 to more than 20,000 in 2012. Revenue went from \$75,000 in 2008 to more than \$350,000 in 2012. A few new restaurants have opened downtown and hospitality sales have increased 45 percent, Broad said.

“An impact to the city in indirect spending at restaurants and other retail amounts to 2.5 times the average cost of a ticket,” Broad said. “At an average price of \$21, that is a \$1,050,000 local impact.”

The City of Gaffney has been heavily involved in supporting and promoting local artists. In 2009, the city received a grant to purchase its historic 1913 post office building. After restoring much of the old structure, the building became home to the Gaffney Visitors Center and Arts Gallery, according to LeighAnn K. Snuggs, the facility's manager.

Where the old post office boxes stood is now a gallery. The building also houses classrooms for pottery, painting and arts classes, and hosts summer art camps for children.

The city even created an artist organization — the Cherokee Alliance of Visual Artists, or CAVA — to develop and support its artist

community. The group also has office space in the building. The artists work with the schools by speaking to students or teaching them their craft. They also are hosting a writing and visual arts contest in October to celebrate 100 years of the old post office building, and are asking students to create a Centennial stamp to commemorate the event.

Artist Nancy Elliott works in the gallery and is treasurer of CAVA. The acrylic painter said the gallery offers a unique opportunity for local artists to exhibit their work.

“The city has been instrumental in getting us organized and keeping us going,” she said.

The arts provide cultural and educational opportunities for all citizens, according to Gaffney Mayor Henry Jolly.

“By promoting and sustaining the arts, Gaffney provides a higher quality of life for its citizens and guests,” he said. •



Reflections of the gallery during a recent exhibit honoring Gaffney's rich textile history. (LeighAnn Snuggs)



Reaching Upward

What is community development?

By Amy Geier Edgar

Community development is a term we hear frequently in the context of economic development typically addressing affordable housing, utility infrastructure and Community Development Block Grants. While it certainly does encompass those vital services, community development incorporates many more areas.

Community development is the practice of taking on activities that provide basic services to communities to make them more livable and sustainable. It supports the development of strong communities and helps improve quality of life, according to Grazier Rhea, community development director for the Catawba Regional Council of Governments.

Spartanburg City Manager Ed Memmott agrees. As the city looked to redevelop its Northside community once plagued by drugs

and violence, officials started with a basic premise: What is a healthy neighborhood?

A number of factors make up a strong, healthy neighborhood, Memmott said. These include:

- good schools and educational offerings;
- convenient access to goods and services;
- easily available public transportation;
- streets that are both walkable and bikeable;
- availability of jobs;
- a mix of housing;
- health and wellness centers;
- parks, gardens and activities that improve quality of life.

It's important to have input from residents and community leaders to define the needs of a community, Rhea said. Planning, zoning, building policies and regulations are important in guiding growth and redevelopment.

“Leaders need to develop a vision for the community and a plan to make the area more livable and sustainable,” Rhea said. “Community development can empower individuals and groups by providing them with skills to make positive changes in their communities. Various groups, organizations and individuals need to establish and maintain effective partnerships to coordinate efforts. It is important to assess the community problems and needs, identify means to address the needs and develop a strategic plan to make the improvements.”

Community development involves facilitating and attracting commitment and investment – financial and otherwise – to a community, said Memmott.

“The means and tactics change depending on whether you're working to reinvigorate a low-income area or working in your

downtown, but the principles of building the right platform for attracting investment remain fundamentally the same,” Memmott said. “Cities do that in any number of ways: by developing well-thought out plans, infrastructure and amenities such as safe walkable streets, parks, parking, special events; by promoting sites and business opportunities; and by providing great city services and financial incentives,” he said.

Spartanburg began the Northside project by talking with multiple stakeholders and building support locally, Memmott said.

Wofford College, Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, the Mary Black and Spartanburg County foundations donated a total of \$250,000, which was matched by local donors. Atlanta-based Purpose Built Communities is consulting on the project, and the city was awarded a \$300,000 federal planning grant.

The redevelopment plan, which is in the early stages, involves adding new mixed-income housing, improving the local elementary school and attracting businesses back to the area.

Officials hope their efforts will attract investments and improve the local economy.

Indeed, economic development is directly impacted by community development, Rhea said.

“Without a sustainable community, it is impossible to promote economic development and attract new businesses to the area,” she said. “Many companies are looking at the quality of life elements in a community when making decisions about locating in the area. Community development issues such as an educated workforce; adequate infrastructure such as water, sewer and roads; housing; educational facilities; health care; child and elderly care; social services; and recreation are all crucial in promoting economic development opportunities.”



Realizing Innovation Starts Early brings together children and adults to learn about healthy eating and gardening at the Hartsville Community Garden. (Photo/Nancy Myers)

The Town of Clinton has seen how engaging with the education community can be beneficial for residents and the economy. In 2010, Presbyterian College located its School of Pharmacy in downtown Clinton, providing education, jobs and health care to the community. The school has established outreach programs to engage with the community, including serving as a primary affiliate in an emerging medical health alliance involving South Carolina free medical clinics and regional hospitals. Select students serve as medication and therapy educators to uninsured patients in the area.

Access to health care also has been critical to community development in the small town of Pelion in Lexington County. The town previously had no doctors’ offices or urgent care clinics, forcing residents to seek medical attention in either Swansea or West Columbia.

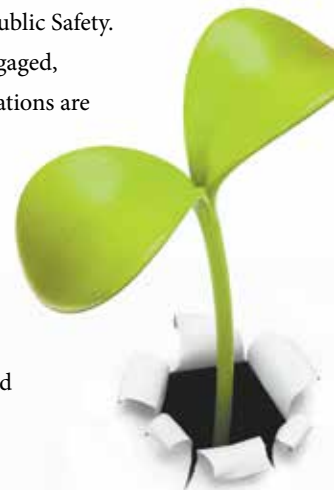
The Pelion Family Practice opened its doors in October 2011, providing adult, pediatric, dental and counseling care to a previously underserved population and to those without insurance. Community Development Block Grant funds were used for land acquisition, construction and medical equipment.

Along with meeting the medical needs of residents in the community, the Pelion Family Practice has created local jobs in the form of nurses, office assistants and contractors, according to Community Development Director Ron Scott. It also has provided an opportunity to partner with local schools in a program that offers an internship for high school health science students, he said.

Strong neighborhood associations also are an important aspect of community development.

“The individuals who make up the associations are the pulse of the community — living in the homes, patronizing businesses, working and contributing to the flow of goods and services,” said Cynthia Mitchell, community services coordinator for the Aiken Department of Public Safety.

“When active and engaged, neighborhood associations are the best source of information to help local government and agencies direct resources to benefit the community as a whole.” Neighborhood associations also help



improve a community by producing knowledgeable and passionate residents to participate on boards, commissions and special projects, she said.

“Neighbors build neighborhoods. Strong neighborhood associations help sustain community development,” Mitchell said.

The amenities and special events such as parks, gardens, community centers and festivals also help by improving quality of life for residents, encouraging a sense of community, and even attracting business and tourism dollars.

Some communities, such as Hartsville, have community gardens. The Hartsville Community Garden allows residents to plant and care for their own plots, and has donated fresh, homegrown produce to local food banks. The mission of the community garden is to “bring Hartsville’s citizens together; increasing our community’s access to healthy food and healthy gardening practices; promoting mutual respect for our neighbors and our surrounding neighborhoods and enhancing community pride, purpose, and values ... and to have fun.”

The City of Easley developed its community garden through a partnership with the United Way of Pickens County. Volunteers can take produce from the garden, but the



The North Myrtle Beach Parks and Recreation Department is managing the construction of a 160-acre park and sports complex due to open March 1, 2014. (City of North Myrtle Beach)

majority goes to the local soup kitchen and area food banks to provide fresh vegetables to those in need.

Parks provide another important way to drive community development and encourage a sense of community among residents.

The North Myrtle Beach Parks and Recreation Department is managing the construction of a 160-acre park and sports complex due to open March 1, 2014. It will offer six baseball/softball fields, eight multipurpose soccer/lacrosse/football fields, an amphitheater, multipurpose trails, dog parks, a 12-acre

common area for picnics and other events, and a 27-acre lake for water activities.

Parks and Recreation Director John Bullard said the purpose of the facility is to grow spring and fall sports tourism, and to expand general recreation and sports opportunities for all ages within the community. So far, \$13 million worth of sports tourism events have been booked at the park for the March-November 2014 period.

The department also oversees an expanded community center, offering a wide variety of classes and sports activities. Also the North Myrtle Beach Aquatic and Fitness Center offers state-of-the-art exercise equipment, three types of pools, a gym and space for specialized exercise classes.

“We find that the opportunities offered through these and our other facilities, plus our outdoor concerts and other events, tend to draw people closer together in the community. They also attract other people to our city,” Bullard said. “We try to make sure that whatever we do, the existing community can participate in it, and those who are either looking for a new vacation spot or a new community to live in will want to be part of it as well. So far, the formula has worked very well for North Myrtle Beach.” ●



A strong, healthy neighborhood includes good schools and educational offerings; public transportation; walkable and bikeable streets; availability of jobs; a mix of housing; health and wellness centers; parks; gardens and activities that improve quality of life. (City of Aiken)

HOMETOWN SNAPSHOT



Photo/LeighAnn Snuggs

People of all ages enjoy the art at the Gaffney Visitors Center and Art Gallery. The city purchased and renovated its 1913 post office building to house the center. The gallery occupies space that once held post office boxes.

You see a street...



We see a lifeline that is a hometown with planned traffic flow, fire stations, thousands of visitors each year, city parks and community centers for children of all ages. Our streets take us to our jobs, our churches, our fun places and even to grandma's house.

www.CitiesMeanBusiness.org



MASC Municipal Association
of South CarolinaSM